

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 0778

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR ADDRESSEES

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AF, PK, IN, IZ, SA, KU, UR, US, XB

SUBJ: AFGHAN EXTERNAL RELATIONS: A 1974 ASSESSMENT

1. SUMMARY: DURING 1974 AFGHANISTAN MAINTAINED ITS STAUNCH
NON-ALIGNED STANCE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST AND AT THE SAME TIME
ADDED IMPETUS TO DIPLOMACY WITHIN ITS OWN REGION. WITH THE
NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF PAKISTAN, AFGHANISTAN DURING 1974
ENJOYED EXCELLENT FOREIGN RELATIONS WITH A BROAD SPECTRUM
OF COUNTRIES. ITS DIPLOMATIC WORK IN THE NEAR EAST WAS
ESPECIALLY FRUITFUL, BOTH IN TERMS OF AIRING ITS FOREIGN
POLICY, ESPECIALLY VIS-A-VIS PAKISTAN, AND IN HARD TERMS
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OF AID COLLECTING. RAPPROCHMENT WITH IRAN WAS A MAJOR BREAK-

THROUGH. PRESIDENT DAOUD'S VISIT DURING JUNE TO THE SOVIET UNION WAS A DIPLOMATIC MAIN EVENT, JUST AS WERE SECRETARY KISSINGER'S NOVEMBER VISIT TO KABUL AND THE NAIM-WAHEED ABDULLAH DECEMBER JOURNEY TO PEKING. ALL THESE VISITS SCORED IN DEMONSTRATING AFGHANISTAN'S NON-ALIGNMENT BEFORE THE MAJOR POWERS. ADVERSELY AFFECTING THIS GENERALLY FAVORABLE PICTURE WAS AFGHANISTAN'S "FORWARD POLICY" ON PUSHTUNISTAN, A DAOUD TRADEMARK, AND RESULTANT HOSTILITY GENERATED WITH THE PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT. AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS WERE MARKED BY VICIOUS PROPAGANDA, FEINTS AT MILITARY ACTION, MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS OVER MEDDLING IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND DIPLOMATIC IMBROGLIOS. THE YEAR ENDED WITH NO PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. AFGHANISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY DURING 1974 WAS ACTIVIST AND POSITIVE, AND OUR FEELING IS THAT THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR FOUND AFGHAN RELATIONS IMPROVED EVERYWHERE WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF PAKISTAN. PRESIDENT DAOUD SAID DURING HIS FIRST POST-COUP MAJOR POLICY STATEMENT THAT AFGHANISTAN'S DIFFERENCES WERE WITH PAKISTAN ONLY, AND CERTAINLY LAST YEAR'S ACTIVITIES ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT UNDERLINED THIS ASSERTION. AFGHAN DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS ACHIEVED A GREATER APPRECIATION OF ITS NON-ALIGNED POSITION, HIGHLIGHTED ITS SIDE OF THE STORY OF PAK-AFGHAN DIFFERENCES, OBTAINED SUBSTANTIAL PROMISES OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND DIVERSIFIED ITS FOREIGN MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAMS.

3. STEADIEST AND MOST PERSISTENT DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS WERE TOWARD STATES OF THE REGION, WHERE AFGHANISTAN MANAGED TO EXPLOIT ALL ITS ISLAMIC TIES TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT WHILE REMAINING MODERATE (OR AT LEAST QUIET) IN ITS VIEWS TOWARD ISRAEL AND COURTING INDIA RIGHT UP TO BEDSIDE.

4. OF PERHAPS GREATEST LASTING CONSEQUENCE WAS AFGHANISTAN'S RAPPROCHMENT WITH IRAN, WHICH REPRESENTED REVERSAL OF AN HISTORIC TREND LASTING MORE THAN A CENTURY AS WELL AS A NEW BREAKTHROUGH IN AFGHAN AND IRANIAN DIPLOMACY. IT MEANS OPENING AFGHANISTAN TO INPUTS OF IRANIAN AID MONEY. (THE FIGURE \$2 BILLION HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY MENTIONED, WHICH MAKES PALE MOST OTHER CONVERSATIONS ABOUT DEVELOPMENT

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ASSISTANCE; IN FACT THE SHAH APPEARS TO HAVE OFFERED A BLANK CHECK TO FINANCE PROJECTS WHICH ARE YET TO BE DEVELOPED.) IT ALSO MOVES AFGHANISTAN CLOSER TO A MAJOR WESTERN-ORIENTED FINANCIAL POWER. WE SHOULD ADD HERE HOWEVER THAT WE SEE THIS REGIONAL INTEREST ON THE PART OF AFGHANISTAN NOT AS AN ABANDONMENT OF ITS TRADITIONAL "BI-TARAFI" (NON-ALIGNMENT, AS BETWEEN AN EASTERN AND WESTERN ORIENTATION) BUT RATHER A MEANS OF GIVING GREATER SUBSTANCE TO IT.

5. EXCHANGES OF VISITS WITH MANY COUNTRIES WERE FREQUENT AND, WE BELIEVE, FOR THE MOST PART PRODUCTIVE IN TERMS OF AFGHAN AIMS. DAOUD SENT HIS BROTHER NAIM TOGETHER WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ABDULLAH TO INDIA TWICE AND TO IRAQ, LIBYA, ALGERIA, EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA, IRAN AND KUWAIT. ABDULLAH ALONE VISITED BULGARIA, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, KUWAIT, IRAN, BANGLADESH AND MALAYSIA (FOR THE ISLAMIC FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING). THE IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE, THE CHIEF OF THE ISLAMIC SECRETARIAT AND AN INDIAN MILITARY DELEGATION WERE AMONG THE VISITORS TO KABUL. AFGHAN MILITARY DELEGATIONS WENT TO MOSCOW AND NEW DELHI.

6. WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT TO STATE IN CRASS MONETARY AND MILITARY TERMS JUST WHAT THESE TO-INGS AND FRO-INGS WILL ACTUALLY NET AFGHANISTAN, SEVERAL NOTABLE PLEDGES HAVE EMERGED. IN ADDITION TO THE IRANIAN COMMITMENT, SAUDI ARABIA HAS GRANTED \$10 MILLION AND PROMISED A \$55 MILLION INTEREST-FREE LOAN; IRAQ HAS PUT UP A \$10 MILLION LOAN PLUS A \$2 MILLION GRANT; PROSPECTS WITH KUWAIT ARE EXTREMELY PROMISING. SMALL TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR AFGHAN MILITARY PERSONNEL WERE LAUNCHED BY INDIA AND EGYPT, WHICH TEND TO REDUCE SLIGHTLY AFGHAN DEPENDENCE ON THE USSR IN THAT FIELD.

7. IN WHAT CAN BE TERMED THE DIPLOMATIC BIG LEAGUE AFGHANISTAN FARED EQUALLY WELL. THE TOP PROTOCOL EVENT OF THE YEAR WAS PRESIDENT DAOUD'S JUNE 4-8 TRIP TO MOSCOW. OF DIPLOMATIC IMPORTANCE WAS THE WAY IN WHICH THIS VISIT SYMBOLIZED THE CLOSE, ALMOST-BUT-NOT-QUITE CLIENTA, RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION; OF PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE WAS AFGHANISTAN'S OBTAINING \$200 MILLION (LATER DESCRIBED AS HAVING DOUBLED INTO A LOAN OF \$412 MILLION) IN DEVELOP-

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MENT ASSISTANCE FOR TWENTY-ONE PROJECT AREAS, DEBT RELIEF ON EARLIER LOANS OF SOME \$134 MILLION, AND AN INCREASED PRICE FOR THE NATURAL GAS FLOWING TO THE SOVIET UNION--AN IMPRESSIVE COMMITMENT EVEN CONSIDERING THAT THE DEVELOPMENT AID IS, TIMEWISE, OPEN-ENDED.

8. BALANCING THIS, IN A KIND OF CALDER MOBILE ASYMMETRY, WERE TWO OTHER DIPLOMATIC MAIN EVENTS: SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT TO KABUL ON NOVEMBER 1 AND THE NAIM-ABDULLAH VISIT TO PEKING DURING DECEMBER. FROM THE FIRST CAME A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE DEVELOPMENT; FROM THE SECOND THE UPGRADING OF CERTAIN MODEST UNDERTAKINGS TO A NEW CHINESE DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENT VALUED AT \$55 MILLION; AND FROM BOTH RECOGNITION OF AFGHAN NON-ALIGNMENT. ADD TO THIS THE FACT THAT AFGHANISTAN ACHIEVED AN AIRING OF ITS PUSHTUNISTAN

COMPLAINTS BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS AND PLAYED A ROLE IN

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NEW YORK THAT LIVED UP TO EXPECTATIONS, AND ONE MAY CONCLUDE THAT IT WAS A GOOD YEAR FOR AFGHAN DIPLOMACY.

9. AFGHAN-U.S. RELATIONS REMAINED ON AN EVEN KEEL, AND EVEN BECAME WARMER AS THE DAOUD GOVERNMENT BECAME INCREASINGLY AWARE THAT US POLICY WAS NOT ANTAGONISTIC TO IT. THE CAPSTONE OF THIS IMPROVEMENT WAS THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT. THE AFGHANS MADE IT CLEAR THAT A VISIBLE, ACTIVE US PRESENCE IS IMPORTANT TO THEM FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES AND TO DEMONSTRATE NON-ALIGNMENT. IN THIS CONNECTION THEY PRESSED FOR ADDITIONAL U.S. ASSISTANCE, ESPECIALLY IN THE HELMAND VALLEY WHERE THE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HAS LONG BEEN A SYMBOL OF U.S. INTEREST IN AFGHANISTAN.

10. AND THEN THERE WAS PAKISTAN. IT WAS ONLY IN ITS
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DISPUTE OVER PUSHTUNISTAN THAT AFGHANISTAN, THOUGH IT
DID NOT SUFFER ACTUAL REVERSES, LOCKED ITS DIPLOMATIC HORNS.
IT IS AT THE SAME TIME EXTREMELY HARD TO KNOW HOW THE AFGHANS
THEMSELVES DEFINE SUCCESS, AND WHAT THEIR AIMS IN FACT WERE
AT THE BEGINNING OF 1974.

11. RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN DURING THE YEAR WERE NOT, TO
BE SURE, ALL BAD. THE "NOMAD SITUATION" THAT PLAGUED RELATIONS
LATE IN 1973 WAS RESOLVED IN JANUARY WHEN BOTH
PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN SOFTENED THEIR POSITIONS. THEN IN
FEBRUARY PAK MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENSE AND FOREIGN
AFFAIRS, AZIZ AHMAD, MADE A DETERMINEDLY FRIENDLY VISIT
TO KABUL TO INVITE PRESIDENT DAOUD TO THE ISLAMIC
SUMMIT CONFERENCE. UNFORTUNATELY FOR ANY POSSIBLE THAW
PRESIDENT DAOUD DECLINED, AND SENT IN HIS STEAD AFGHANISTAN'S
AMBASSADOR TO DELHI, A PERSON DISLIKED BY THE PAKS FOR HIS
PUSHTUNISTAN STANCE WHILE AFGHANISTAN'S AMBASSADOR AT THE
UNITED NATIONS.

12. THIS KIND OF MINOR IRRITANT CHARACTERIZED EVEN THE
NICETIES OF PAK-AFGHAN EXCHANGE. PRESIDENT DAOUD'S
DECEMBER 31 DESPATCH OF CONDOLENCE MESSAGES TO PAKISTANI
LEADERS FOR THE SWAT EARTHQUAKE INCLUDED ONE FOR NATIONAL
AWAMI PARTY LEADER WALI KHAN. TWICE DURING 1974 THEY HAVE
THIS BHUTTO BETE NOIRE CELEBRITY WELCOMES, SURELY A GRATUITOUS
REMINDER TO PAKISTANIS OF THEIR NATONS'S ETHNIC PERMEABILITY
AND AFGHANISTAN'S INTENTION TO EXPLOIT IT. WHEN THE AFGHAN
RED CRESCENT ORGANIZATION SENT \$15,000 TO EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS
THE GIFT WAS ADDRESSED TO "SWAT, PUSHTUNISTAN."

13. THESE WERE THE MINOR INCIDENTS. MORE IMPORTANT TO
THE YEAR'S DISMAL RECORD OF CONTRETEMPS WERE BHUTTO'S
ACCUSATIONS, WHILE TOURING BALUCHISTAN IN JULY, THAT
AFGHANISTAN WAS SUPPORTING DISSIDENCE IN PAKISTAN, MASSING
TROOPS, AND EVEN HAD SPONSORED AN ATTEMPT ON HIS LIFE.
AFGHAN VERBAL RESPONSES WERE EQUALLY INTEMPERATE, WIDESPREAD
AND PROLONGED. THE PROPAGANDA WAXED VINDICTIVE ON
BOTH SIDES, ESPECIALLY AS PAKISTANI ACTIVITY TO CONTROL DISS-
IDENCE IN BALUCHISTAN ACQUIRED MORE HARSHNESS AND VIGOR.

14. THE PROPAGANDA ALSO WAS GIVEN IMPETUS BY AFGHAN ALLE-
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GATIONS OF PAK VIOLATIONS OF AFGHAN AIRSPACE--CLAIMS GIVEN CREDIBILITY WHEN A PAK HELICOPTER WAS FORCED DOWN IN AFGHAN TERRITORY ON AUGUST 10. THE CRAFT AND CREW WERE RELEASED ON OCTOBER 14 (THE CREW DEPARTED IMMEDIATELY --THE CHOPPER FOLLOWED AFTER SERVICING) AFTER SUITABLE PAKISTANI "APOLOGIES-". AFGHANISTAN CLAIMED DURING NOVEMBER THAT BALUCHI REFUGEES WERE COMING IN LARGE NUMBERS TO ESCAPE PAKISTANI RETRIBUTION. PAKISTANI CLAIMS COUNTERED THAT AFGHANS WERE COMING THERE TO ESCAPE ECONOMIC HARDSHIP AND POLITICAL REPRESSION. 1975 BEGAN INAUSPICIOUSLY WITH ANNOUNCEMENT ON PAKISTANI RADIO THAT PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO HAD ASKED PRESIDENT DAOUD TO VISIT AND DISCUSS DIFFERENCES, FOLLOWED BY AFGHAN DENIALS THAT SUCH AN INVITATION HAD BEEN GIVEN. (EVEN THOUGH, IN FACT THERE HAD BEEN PRELIMINARY SOUNDINGS ABOUT SUCH A SUMMIT MEETING.) IT WAS AN ATMOSPHERE OF GENERAL RANCOR.

15. FROM THE AFGHAN VIEWPOINT, IT MIGHT BE SAID THAT THEY DID OBTAIN DURING 1974 INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF THEIR "PROBLEM" WITH PAKISTAN SINCE THEY MANAGED TO HAVE THE USSR, US, CHINA, IRAN, EGYPT, THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE AND THE UN ALL ENGAGED IN ONE KIND OR ANOTHER OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY ON THIS SUBJECT. AT A DEEPER LEVEL, HOWEVER, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT THE AFGHANS HOPE TO ACHIEVE OTHER THAN PERHAPS TO KEEP THE ISSUE ALIVE IN THE EVENT THAT AN OPPORTUNITY SOMETIME MIGHT ARISE FOR THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISMEMBERMENT OF PAKISTAN. YET THEIR OFFICIAL POSITION IS THAT THEY COVET NO PAK TERRITORY AND DESIRE ONLY THAT THE PUSHTUNS AND BALUCHIS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DURAND LINE OBTAIN THEIR RIGHTS UNDER THE PAK CONSTITUTION. THE PAKISTANIS, HOWEVER, JUSTIFIABLY REGARD THIS POSITION AS INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL PAKISTANI AFFAIRS AND NOT A MATTER FOR DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS.

16. ALTHOUGH DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS AT YEAR'S END MAY HAVE RESULTED IN SOME, POSSIBLY ONLY TEMPORARY AMELIORATION OF THE TONE OF PROPAGANDA BLASTS ON AFGHAN AND PAK RADIO, IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW THIS LONG-STANDING PROBLEM CAN BE RESOLVED.

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